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ABSTRACT

In Spain, the term "career development" refers to vocational or career guidance services. The 1983 Law on University Reform conferred on universities the freedom of teaching, endowing them with legal status and administrative powers. Thus, there are no regulations regarding guidance at this educational level. Guidance departments in secondary schools coordinate the work of tutors and provide counseling. Vocation or career guidance services are being transferred to autonomous communities. Services are organized according to a four-stage model that enables clients to follow an individual career path. The four stages are: (1) identification of employment skills; (2) positioning in the labor market; (3) matching qualifications with labor market requirements; and (4) active job search. A summary of current policy issues include: state and regional governments do not usually grant guidance the importance it deserves; the number of specialized guidance professionals is small considering the great demand for services; guidance initiatives are increasing; and policies are uneven concerning guidance in the different educational levels. Action steps that Spain must consider for the future include: identifying overlapping policies, improving the current provisions for career guidance; promoting research on the delivery of career development; and developing comprehensive lifelong career guidance programs. (JDM)

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Career Development
In Spain

By

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18. CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN SPAIN

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In Spain, the term career development (*desarrollo de la carrera*) is not used in official language or legislation. Instead, vocational or career guidance services (*servicios de orientación profesional*) are used even though experts in the field advocate using a career development approach. In this paper, we briefly describe career guidance services and provision within the education system and outside it, policies regarding them and key issues for the future with action steps to improve provision.

Context

In Spain, the 1978 Constitution determines the distribution of responsibility between the state and the 17 autonomous communities (states). Currently, eight autonomous communities have full power over education. The rest have shared responsibility for education with the state having exclusive control in some areas and delegating authority in others. Vocational training (i.e., non-school) is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security through its National Employment Institute (Instituto Nacional de Empleo or INEM). Institutions may be state, state-subsidized private or non-state-subsidized private. Most have a municipal education department (*concejalía de educación*) which is responsible for the provision and maintenance of school buildings and the management of municipal education-related programs. The 1983 Law on University Reform (*Ley de Reforma Universitaria* or LRU) confers on universities freedom of teaching and research, endowing them with legal status and administrative powers. Thus, each institution is autonomous. There is no regulation regarding guidance at this educational level.

Primary Education

Primary education lasts six years (ages 6 to 12 years). The aim is to provide all children with a common education, basic cultural skills and knowledge relating to oral expression, reading, writing and arithmetic, and progressive independence within their environment. Assessment is continuous (using various tests) and comprehensive (taking into account the different subject

areas), in accordance with pre-defined objectives. Pupils move automatically from one cycle to the next. When it is noted that a pupil is not responding to the overall planned objectives, teachers are required to provide appropriate additional teaching and, where necessary, adapt the curriculum. Tutors provide educational guidance, and there are no career development activities. Promotion to secondary education is automatic; there are no exams or other type of selection procedures.

Secondary Education

Secondary education is organized in three main divisions: compulsory secondary education, *bachillerato* and intermediate vocational training. Vocational training is designed to provide pupils with the qualifications they need to perform various professional activities successfully. It includes basic vocational training during compulsory secondary education and specific vocational training (during the intermediate stream).

Compulsory secondary education (*educación secundaria obligatoria* or ESO) exists for 12 to 16 year olds. This system eliminates early streaming and allows pupils to enter the labour market after the compulsory period. The purpose of ESO is to provide access to employment and to prepare for post-secondary education. Basic vocational training is introduced for all pupils as a specific subject area. It covers training in different technologies, awareness of society and employment, and knowledge and basic skills common to a wide variety of careers. Pupil assessment is continuous and integrated, but separated into various subjects. Assessment must be carried out collectively by the team of teachers responsible for the same group of pupils, with the co-ordination of the tutor and advice from the Guidance Department (Departamento de Orientación). At the beginning of the ESO, teachers make an initial assessment of every pupil.

Pupils who have attained the required objectives at the end of compulsory secondary education receive a certificate of secondary education (*graduado en educación secundaria*), which enables them to gain access to the *bachillerato* or the intermediate level specific vocational training. All pupils receive an attendance certificate, recording the number of years studied and the marks obtained in each subject. They also get guidance concerning their educational or professional future. This is perhaps the most crucial point where pupils must make decisions as to which way to continue.

Bachillerato (post-compulsory) is for 16 to 18 year olds. Its aim is to foster intellectual and emotional maturity, provide the knowledge and skills that allow pupils to fulfil social responsibility and qualify them to enter higher level vocational training or university. Basic vocational training continues, with an optional subject covering the further vocational elements and transition to working life. Only pupils who pass all subjects receive the *bachillerato*

certificate, entitling them to access higher level vocational training or university. There is no final examination for the *bachillerato.*

Specific vocational training (*formación profesional específica* or FP) is also for 16 to 18 year olds. The objectives are to facilitate integration into working life and to contribute to continuing training for all citizens. It is structured into two training levels: intermediate and upper. Although admittance to the FP requires successful completion of compulsory secondary education, in special circumstances, such as work experience or being older that 20 years, entrance may be gained through an examination. Successful completion of the FP allows direct access to specific university studies related to a vocational training course. During the FP, one teacher is delegated as the tutor of a class and provides educational and vocational guidance. Guidance departments in secondary schools co-ordinate the work of tutors and provide counselling.

Current Provision

Education System

Vocational guidance during compulsory education is regulated by the 1990 *General Organization of the Education System Act* (*Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo* or LOGSE), which stresses the importance of educational and vocational guidance as one of the necessary factors for enhancing the quality of education. There are three structures for this provision: tutorial action (*acción tutorial*) where teachers assume guidance functions, guidance departments in secondary schools and external services serving primary and secondary schools. All students are entitled to guidance provision, although in practice, due to resources and a lack of staff, not all benefit from it.

In preschool and primary school, guidance is provided by teachers, supported by external services. They are multidisciplinary teams located outside the schools and working with several schools, usually on a weekly basis. There is no career guidance at this level. In secondary education, guidance departments provide support in teaching and learning processes, academic and vocational guidance, and tutor support. They are also responsible for co-ordination with other departments and for establishing links with the community. Guidance workers belong to the teaching staff and generally teach courses in psychology and the transition to working life. The time allocated to guidance functions and to teaching depends on each school, as does the extent to which career development is provided. During the FP, there is a subject called training and labour guidance. Teachers must pass an exam to teach in this module. Most universities have established career guidance services (Repetto, 1994). Most place emphasis on entering the labour market, placement and giving information. Some universities are paying attention to the career development of their students, through the career service or by introducing it in the study program.

The training of guidance workers takes place in the university. They can have a degree in pedagogy, psychology or psycho-pedagogy (*psicopedagogía*), a two-year degree accessed only on completion of at least a three-year degree in a related subject. Teachers must complete their initial training and pass a state exam for "teachers in psychology and pedagogy" to qualify to work in a secondary school guidance department. In higher education, however, there is a great variety of qualifications among the staff. Moreover, there is a practice of "hiring" students on "training grants," whereby they are supposed to be trained in information and guidance techniques within the careers service. In practice, these students perform the same tasks as regular workers. They are really carrying out guidance functions, but without the status of being employees. Unfortunately, this is a very common practice in Spain. There are also short courses in career guidance, post-graduate courses and master's degrees in general guidance offered by some universities, as well as conferences and professional meetings, which provide continuous training to guidance workers.

Employment Services

Vocational or career guidance services have been traditionally provided by INEM, but are being transferred to the autonomous communities. The target groups are people in search of a job, and registered at an employment office. Services are organized according to a four-stage model that enables clients to follow an individual career path leading to entrance into the labour market. Stages 2 and 4 are those most related to career guidance.

Stage 1: Identification of Employment Skills

- **Occupational interview.**

- **Professional assessment.**

Stage 2: Positioning in the Labour Market

- **Employment related information.** Information sessions on topics related to the environment of the searcher: labour market, training and other services provided by the INEM.

- **Training and employment personal plan (career development).** Individual attention to job seekers in order to detect their interests, attitudes, skills and professional resources, and assist them in the design of their own career path.

- **Personal development issues for the occupation.** Individual and group counselling/advising so job hunters can develop the personal skills and abilities that enable them to start and follow-up different activities necessary to find a job.

- **Information and motivation for self-employment.** Group sessions providing information on the paper work, assistance, grants and requirements for setting up a business.

Stage 3: Matching Qualifications with the Labour Market's Requirements

- **Occupational vocational training.**

- **Workshop-schools** (*escuelas taller*) and **skilled craft centres** (*casas de oficio*).

- **Experiential programs.**

Stage 4: Active Job Search

- **Initial active job search (AJS) interview.** Resources and skills in job search techniques are analyzed, in order to decide which AJS actions are proper or if alternatives should be sought.

- **Search groups.** Group counselling to implement a planned and organized job search strategy.

- **Interview workshop.** Group training in interviewing skills.

- **Individual active job search.** The client is accompanied through his/her job hunting process.

- **Follow-up and counselling.** For those who have taken part in some career development activities, and after six months have not found a job. They are entitled to six, one-hour interviews.

- **Advising in self-employment projects.** Individual guidance to entrepreneurs who wish to establish their own business, assisting them in developing a project and getting the business going.

The experts who deliver these services are called *técnicos* (technicians) and their qualifications vary, although most are university graduates. The technicians in the information activities have a bachelor's degree. Those in charge of the training and employment personal plan, personal development for the occupation and interview workshop activities have a master's degree (mostly psychologists). If clients are interested in working in other European countries, services are provided by the EURES (European Employment Services), a network of nearly 500 Euro-advisers all over Europe, 35 of them in Spain. Euro-advisers provide information on living and working conditions in other countries, guidance and counselling on job search techniques, and information on, and access to, trans-European job vacancies available through the network. Euro-advisers are mainly university graduates who speak another European language and undergo comprehensive training

in the European Commission. All these services are included in the National Action Plan for Employment.

Current Policy Issues

Educational Policy: Ministry of Education and Culture

Guidance in the non-university sector is regulated by the 1990 Organic Act referred to earlier (LOGSE). There is no reference to career development in the Act; however, some career development functions are outlined. Unfortunately, implementation has been uneven, especially in the different autonomous communities, and no sanction is applied if regulations are not fulfilled. Thus, guidance departments do not actually exist in all secondary schools, and primary schools are not all supported by external services.

The functions of the guidance workers are not clearly outlined. They are regulated in an ambiguous and non-operational way, making it difficult to assess them and supervise their fulfillment. Among schools, there are inconsistencies in the roles of guidance workers, dissatisfaction and burnout. Moreover, tutors (form teachers) are also assigned, by law, guidance functions which sometimes overlap with those of guidance professionals, thus interfering with their work, instead of supporting it. In higher education, there are no regulations to support guidance delivery, leading to the creation of very different services across institutions. For the most part, they have been established with no official backup.

In spite of these and other limitations, the situation regarding guidance is better than it was 20 years ago. Since the 1980s, pedagogues, psychologists and psycho-pedagogues have been lobbying for the right to work in the profession for which they were qualified. Before the LOGSE, guidance was only delivered by some teachers, at the end of primary school, and there were no official regulations supporting it. Now, psychologists have created professional associations through which they have a greater social and institutional influence. The other professionals have not yet established associations of their own, so their lobbying regarding the institutionalization of guidance has not gone very far. However, there is a professional association, the Spanish Guidance Association (Asociación Española de Orientación y Psicopedagogía or AEOP), to which many of them belong, promoting continuing training, professional meetings and other activities to advance guidance.

Guidance Policy in the Ministry of Labour and Other Institutions Related to Employment

Traditionally, the National Institute of Employment (INEM) has been responsible for the insertion (placement) of young people and adults into the labour market. With the transfer of powers to the autonomous communities, this responsibility is being shared. Other institutions and

organizations within the Ministry of Labour and Social Security provide guidance to immigrants and other target groups with specific difficulties. Several compensatory policies have been issued, supporting populations in critical situations such as young people in search of their first job, the long-term unemployed and workers with special training and guidance needs. Besides these official institutions, there are other private or semi-private organizations, companies, women's institutes, the church and non-governmental organizations that carry out career guidance activities aimed at their particular target groups. Funding for these groups comes from the institutions themselves, the INEM or from grants they obtain. In some cases, funding comes from the clients and their families.

In private schools, guidance activities (including guidance worker's salaries) are funded through tuition fees, foundations and other grants. Since Spain joined the European Union, the European Social Fund is funding several guidance initiatives, in addition to those provided by the INEM.

Summary Concerning Policy Issues

In general we can summarize the following features in Spain:

- State and regional governments do not usually grant guidance the importance it deserves and do not always support its social and economic value.

- The number of specialized guidance professionals is small considering the great demand for services. Not all people working in guidance have specific guidance training. When they do not have the necessary qualifications, they often are hired anyway, but in a lower category.

- Guidance initiatives are increasing. Several social groups which were unaware of the benefits of guidance are now starting to organize services, with few resources and little funding at first, but with the hope of better services in the future.

- Policies are uneven concerning guidance in the different educational levels. There is no continuity from one stage to another, which gives an impression of guidance being delivered "in pieces," instead of being a holistic process.

- Despite considerable advancements in the guidance field, there is still a long way to go.

Key Issues for the Future

As we identify key issues from the Spanish perspective, we also offer some suggestions that could improve guidance provision in the educational and employment contexts.

Improvement of Guidance in the Educational Context

- Spain should develop its own career development theory or theories. Each educational system is different, and no matter how adequate a certain approach might prove elsewhere, it cannot just be copied without being carefully adapted to the country's specific context. The International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) has an important role to play here by fostering comparative studies that shed light on the different countries' realities.

- A consensus needs to be developed between the central government and the autonomous communities.

- Guidance departments, with qualified guidance staff, exist in most (but not all) secondary schools and in some autonomous communities. An effort should be made to grant enough resources so *all* schools can afford a guidance department.

- There is a need to improve the quality of vocational training education (FP). In Spain, academic studies have greater social prestige. With educational reform, the situation is somewhat better and more options are provided, but there is still a long way to go. There is also a need to enhance career development and career education in vocational training centres.

- University programs, where guidance workers are trained should meet the requirements of the jobs that both the public and the private sector offer. Universities don't always respond to the demands and needs of the society. There exists a lot of professional intrusion, due to the lack of correspondence between workers' roles and the requirements of their jobs.

- There is a need to redesign career guidance and development assessment instruments so they respond better to young people's needs and characteristics.

- It is important to make a clearer distinction between guidance professionals and the teaching staff. Guidance workers are being required to address many problems and more is being demanded of them from society in general, and the schools in particular. However,

this is not adequately rewarded, and there is a lot of burnout among guidance workers.

- Inspectors and supervisors of the educational system should be directly involved in the follow-up of guidance practices, or at least there should be somebody in charge of assessing effective guidance provision.

- When there is a shift in the government, guidance initiatives should not be discontinued if they have demonstrated effectiveness.

- Educational policies should be issued in close collaboration with the experts in guidance. Many policy decisions are made without consulting guidance experts, leading to inadequate practices and inconsistencies.

- It is necessary to co-ordinate educational and employment policies. In Spain, there is little co-ordination or communication between these two systems, in spite of all the efforts made by universities and professional associations. Traditionally, what is taught in the classrooms, and what graduates find later in the labour market are two opposite realities. The different ministries (Education on one side, and Labour on the other) are reluctant to co-ordinate their actions and budgets, and there are no joint projects. This is a major drawback in the provision of career development services.

Improvement of Career Guidance in the Labour Market Context
The following recommendations also seem appropriate:

- Industries and work centres should be more involved in career development provision.

- Motivate and support companies to accept trainees from vocational training in work experience.

- Assist young people and adults in acquiring employability skills, helping them acquire the skills needed to cope with a more flexible and changing labour market.

- Support policies in favour of immigrants, and introduce multicultural guidance approaches.

- Encourage networking among professionals involved in guidance and career development, as well as the development of professional associations.

- Develop and improve computer-assisted guidance programs so they are not mere information tools. Integrate all the technologies available, bearing in mind ethical issues concerning those technologies. A well-designed project based on career development theories, and carried out by a team of both computer engineers and guidance experts is essential.

Action Steps

In order for the above issues to be addressed, several action steps can be identified:

- Identify overlapping and discontinued policies regarding career development programs and services at all levels of government and recommend corrective actions.

- Improve the current provision of career development guidance and counselling programs.

- Promote and encourage research projects on the delivery of career development guidance and counselling programs in school, community and work settings.

- Evaluate the results of existing research on counsellor training and carry out further research in the field to enhance current training programs.

- Develop comprehensive lifetime career development guidance and counselling programs aimed at different target groups:
  - people at risk of exclusion;
  - people with disabilities;
  - adults; and
  - immigrants and ethnic minorities.

References

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